

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

I. CLAIM STATUS AND AMENDMENTS

Claims 6-11 and 13-25 were pending in this application when last examined and stand rejected.

Claim 6 is amended. Support can be found on page 5, the second full paragraph, of the specification as filed.

No new matter has been added.

II. OBVIOUSNESS REJECTIONS

On pages 2-5 in items 4-12, claims 6, 7, 9, 11 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Xing et al. (CN 1427255), of which the closest translation is U.S. 2005/0106708, in view of Yasuda et al. (U.S. 7,092,154). Also, on pages 5-6 in items 13-17, claims 6-9, 11 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jimbo et al. (IEEE Transactions on Biomedical Engineering, 1993) in view of Hanni et al. (U.S. 6,689,594). On pages 6-8 in items 18-23, claims 13 and 19-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over over Jimbo et al. in view of Hanni et al. as applied above, and in further view of Sugihara et al. (WO 99/34202). Finally, on pages 8-9 in items 24-26, claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over over Jimbo et al. in view of Hanni et al. as applied above, and in further view of Sugihara et al. (WO 99/34202) and Varalli et al. (U.S. 2001/0041830).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection as applied to the amended claims.

In particular, it is noted that claim 6, the only independent claim, has been amended to recite that laminin or collagen is applied on the surface of the electrode. Thus, according to the amended claims, the nerve cells in the claimed regions would form a cell network without escaping from such regions since laminin or collagen is applied to the surface of the electrode and the transparent semipermeable membrane is laid over the regions.

In reference to the above rejections, it is noted that none of the cited references teach or suggest that laminin or collagen is applied to the surface of the electrode. Thus, these rejections are untenable and should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is hereby requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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